

SEPTEMBER 6, 2000

**SCHAKOWSKY HAILS AWARD WINNING JOURNALISTS JUDITH AND BILL MOYERS FOR THEIR NEW PUBLIC TELEVISION SERIES "ON OUR OWN TERMS"**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined other members of Congress and palliative care organizations to honor Judith and Bill Moyers for their Television series "On Our Own Terms." The four-part series, which examines death and dying and is intended to restore the national dialogue on this issue, is scheduled to air on public television beginning on Sunday, September 10, 2000.

Below is Schakowsky's statement.

*"I want to thank Bill and Judith Moyers for their extraordinary work, "On Our Own Terms." It is incredibly important to educate Congress and the public on the issues involved in death and dying. We need to be able to have open, frank and wide-ranging discussions, in our homes, in our communities and here in Congress.*

*"As members of Congress, we serve on different committees and specialize in different policy areas. We come from different political parties and from different parts of the country. But death is not a partisan or regional issue. Each one of us will be touched by it. We need to be more educated and more aware of the options we have and the resources that are available to help us.*

*"It is our responsibility in Congress to debate overarching policy issues. It is also our responsibility to make sure that the terminally ill and their families have the tools and the ability to make informed and very personal decisions.*

*"I am glad to be here with others who share a commitment to making sure that we take a broad and responsible approach to death and dying. I am particularly interested in ensuring that, as families deal with terminal illnesses, they do not also have to face enormous financial burdens or the lack of access to compassionate care.*

*"I again want to thank the Moyers and PBS for taking the lead in bringing these difficult issues out into the open. This series will do a great deal to begin the education process and spur public debate.*

*"We need to build on your efforts. We need to educate providers on pain management, other effective ways to care for the terminally ill, and how to respect the rights and wishes of patients and their families. And we need to educate individuals and families about those rights and options.*

*"I learned about dying with dignity from my father. We didn't accomplish this alone. We had help from the staff of the Palliative CareCenter of the North Shore in my district.*

*I was able to see what a difference they made in my father's life. Through "On our Own Terms," many Americans will have their own opportunity to see end-of-life care.*

*"Public interest will be high following this series. I am so glad to be working with Senator Rockefeller, Rep. Pryce, Senators Grassley and Collins, and other colleagues as we continue this discussion. We will be working on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, which will help us get results. In the short time left in this session, our offices will begin to pull together information to share with our constituents and reach out to other Congressional offices to spur discussion.*

*"I want to thank the Partnership for Caring, Last Act and Americans for Better Care for the Dying for sponsoring this reception. I look forward to working with you and organizations like the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization on these issues."*